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DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

Medical Officer of Health

FOR 1946

G. H. H. WAYLEN, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.
Medical Officer of Health for the Devizes Rural District

DEVIZES
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DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1946

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit herewith my Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1946.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

G. H. H. WAYLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Browfort, Devizes.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in Acres—63,515

Population as estimated by the Registrar-General—12,120

Number of inhabited houses—3,405

Rateable Value—£65,979

Product of a penny rate—£276 19s. 5d.

VITAL STATISTICS

	M.	F.	TOTAL
Live Births	114	114	228
Legitimate	105	104	209
Illegitimate	9	10	19
Stillbirths	3	6	9
Legitimate	3	6	9
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Live Birth Rate			18·81
Live Birth Rate for England and Wales			19·1
Number of Deaths from all causes ...	77	68	145
Crude Death Rate			11·96
Crude Death Rate for England and Wales			11·5
Death of Infants under one year:—			
Total	5	2	7
Legitimate	4	1	5
Illegitimate	1	1	2
Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births			30·7
Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales			43·0

CAUSES OF DEATH
AS RETURNED BY REGISTRAR-GENERAL

		M.	F.	Total
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	—	—	—
2	Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
4	Whooping Cough	—	—	—
5	Diphtheria	—	—	—
6	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	2	2	4
7	Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—	—
8	Syphilitic Diseases	1	—	1
9	Influenza	1	1	2
10	Measles	—	—	—
11	Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio Encephalitis	—	—	—
12	Acute Infective Encephalitis ...	—	—	—
13	Cancer of Buccal Cavity, Oesophagus and Uterus (F)	1	2	3
14	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	3	3	6
15	Cancer of Breast	—	—	—
16	Cancer of all other sites	7	6	13
17	Diabetes	—	—	—
18	Intracranial Vascular Lesions ...	5	7	12
19	Heart Disease	29	25	54
20	Other Diseases of Circulatory System ...	4	2	6
21	Bronchitis	4	2	6
22	Pneumonia	4	3	7
23	Other Respiratory Diseases	1	—	1
24	Ulcer of Duodenum or Stomach ...	—	—	—
25	Diarrhoea—under two years of age ...	—	—	—
26	Appendicitis	1	—	1
27	Other Digestive Diseases	1	3	4
28	Nephritis	3	—	3
29	Puerperal and Post Abortional Sepsis ...	—	—	—
30	Other Maternal Causes	—	—	—
31	Premature Birth	1	—	1
32	Congenital Malformations, Birth Injuries and Infantile Diseases	2	—	2
33	Suicide	—	—	—
34	Road Traffic Accidents	—	—	—
35	Other Violent Causes	1	3	4
36	All other causes	6	9	15
	All Causes ...	77	68	145

Satisfactory features are :—

(i) Only deaths attributed to acute infectious diseases were two from Influenza.

(ii) No deaths of Infants under two years from Diarrhoea.

(iii) No Road Traffic deaths.

(iv) No deaths in or after Childbirth.

Nearly 50% of deaths attributed to Cardio Vascular Lesions, and 15% to Cancer.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Medical Officer of Health :—G. H. H. Waylen, M.B., D.P.H., Cantab.

Chief Sanitary Inspector (also Surveyor and Water Engineer)—G. E. Williams, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector :—G. J. Watts, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., M.R.I.P.H.H. (From 1st October, 1946).

Housing Inspector :—M. I. C. Spencer.

Ambulance Service provided by a Joint Ambulance Committee from the Borough and Rural District Councils of Devizes.

Nursing in the Home :—Nurses supported by District Nursing Associations available over most of area. The Maternity duties of District Nurses forbid or curtail their attendance on some sufferers despite their need.

Laboratory Facilities :—The Greville Laboratory at Salisbury Infirmary utilised for all purposes.

Clinics and Treatment Centres :—All under the auspices of the Wilts County Health Department, as follows :—

(i) Orthopaedic at Scout Hall and District Hospital.

(ii) Tuberculosis at District Hospital.

(iii) Venereal Diseases (female) at District Hospital.

(iv) Ophthalmic Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.

(v) Infant Welfare Clinic elsewhere in Devizes.

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL

During the year the number of beds was further reduced from 88 to 60. Inpatients treated totalled 1,056, of these nearly 400 came from your District. The outpatients department dealt with close on 2,200 with attendances numbering nearly 15,000. Increased accommodation for this Department is an urgent need. The number of patients attending the X-Ray Department passed the 2,000 figure.

The Physio Therapy Department was working all out and gave no less than 8,500 treatments during the year.

The Honorary Consulting Staff was further increased by the appointment of an Ophthalmic Surgeon from Bristol and a Radiologist from Bath.

RATE AIDED HOSPITAL

DEVIZES AND PEWSEY JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL

Owing to shortages of staff, both Nursing and Domestic, the usefulness of this Institution was greatly curtailed. Only 45 cases were admitted over the whole year ; of these a third were Military cases.

Your District only supplied three cases. Fortunately it was a very healthy year, but the enforced closure of the Hospital for over three months (July—October), and again at the year's end might have been a serious matter. Unless the need for Nurses is realised by the Community and willing recruits come forward, Institutions such as the above cannot keep going.

Cases admitted to Devizes and Pewsey Joint Isolation Hospital in 1946 :—

Diseases	Borough	Devizes R.D.	Pewsey R.D.	Other Districts	Military
Scarlet Fever... ...	5	9	5	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	—	1	—	—	—
Measles	—	—	—	—	1
Whooping Cough ...	—	—	—	—	—
Rubella	—	—	—	—	3
Vincents Angina ...	—	1	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	1	—	1
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—
Mumps	1	—	—	—	2
Anterio Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia and Influenza	—	—	—	—	1
Tonsillitis	—	—	—	—	2
Observation	1	1	—	—	4
Chickenpox	4	—	—	—	2
Pemphigus	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	11	12	6	—	16

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Pneumonia (Primary and Influenzal) ...	3
Dysentery	7
Scarlet Fever	9
Whooping Cough	6
Measles	8
Erysipelas	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1

A very light year. Dysentery cases all from Wilts County Mental Hospital.

Absence of any notifications of Diphtheria again suggest that the Immunisation Campaign is beginning to show results.

T.B. NOTIFICATIONS

Age Group	New Cases				T.B. Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—15	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15—25	1	2	—	—	2	1	—	—
25—35	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—
35—45	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—65	—	3	—	—	1	—	—	—
Over 65... ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	3	5	2	—	3	2	—	—

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA—1946

Number of children who completed a full course by 31st December, 1946.

Under 5 years	5—15 years	Total
190	27	217

Number of children who received a reinforcing dose during 1946	113
Total number of Children under five years immunised by 31st December, 1946 ...	419 (43%)
Estimated Population under five years ...	968
Total number of Children under 15 years immunised by 31st December, 1946	1,905 (71%)
Estimated Population under 15 years	2,668

These percentages should be sufficient to afford considerable protection to the community.

MATERNITY SERVICE

As before, Midwives provided and financed by Voluntary Nursing Associations cover most of your area, and fulltime County Council Midwives are available to fill gaps in the service should such occur.

Provision of more maternity beds actually in your area is an urgent need. Housing conditions to-day find many expectant mothers unable to have their babies at home. The use of existing rate-aided Maternity Centres at Corsham and Bradford entails long and trying journeys for pre-natal examinations. After the confinement visits by husband or mother can only be paid at the cost of time and money.

HOUSING

The Housing Survey of your District progressed steadily throughout the year, and it looks as if some 50% of existing working class dwellings are either

(a) Unfit, irreparable and due for demolition (10%) or,

(b) Will need varying degrees of reconditioning.

38 Council Houses were begun early in the year, 24 at Market Lavington, and 14 at Bromham.

11 houses were under construction by private enterprise at the end of the year, and 2 had been completed,—the only ones during the year under review.

The acquisition of sites has been regretably delayed mainly for the following reasons. Firstly, the time taken up by various Government Departments before final approval obtained. Secondly, that caused by provision of preliminary lay-out Plans prior to and during negotiations with owners.

WATER SUPPLY

Major Waters' Post War Scheme for your District was approved in outline by Wilts County Council and was forwarded to Ministry of Health.

Neither further linkage with Borough Supplies nor further augmentation of your existing supply took place during year.

SEWERAGE

Schemes approved by Wilts County Council and forwarded to Ministry of Health, who called for further particulars.

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report 1946

To the Chairman and Members of the Devizes Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my second annual Report in conjunction with your Medical Officer of Health. Various particulars which relate more specifically to my duties as Water Engineer and Building Surveyor have been included, as they are closely inter-related to Public Health matters.

Housing

With the return of Building Trades Operatives and labourers from the Forces, and the consequent increase in the local building force, a slight impression was made on the pent-up accumulation of long overdue repairs and renovations.

A simple system of licensing building operations with the object of ensuring that building resources were for the greater part diverted into the building of new houses, and that only essential repairs were done, was instituted by the Government in 1945. By 1946 this simple system had become riven with complicated and elaborate procedures for obtaining materials or permission to do a job. These procedures prove to be very burdensome to the small builders in particular, and take up a great deal of their time and that of your Officers.

It is hoped that the position will improve in this respect and so facilitate the work of repairing a large number of working-class houses which are in an appalling state of disrepair.

Water Supply

A piped water supply is only available in 50% of the parishes. Eight of these are wholly served from the Council's Mains and four partially. Five others are served in part by the Devizes Borough Mains and private mains.

The rest of the District depends on wells, many of which are shallow and of doubtful quality and quantity.

The quality and quantity of the water from the Council's source were satisfactory.

Samples taken during the year were as follows:—

Mains Supply

		Bacteriological Exam.
8. 5.1946		Satisfactory
26. 9.1946		Satisfactory
1.10.1946		Satisfactory
7.10.1946		Satisfactory
5.12.1946		Satisfactory

Private Supply

5. 6.1946	Potterne	Satisfactory
6. 8.1946	Tank at Seend	Unsatisfactory
12. 8.1946	Well at Lydeway	Unsatisfactory
17.12.1946	Well at Urchfont	Satisfactory

The amount of water pumped at Great Cheverell was 38,039,300 gallons, and the amount supplied by the Devizes Borough, 7,324,000.

The number of new consumers connected was 76.

During the year it was found to be necessary to re-lay 500 yards of 4-inch defective main in Poulshot.

The following Tables show the position in regard to the availability of piped water supplies.

Parish	No. of Houses Supplied		Population supplied	
	Separate connection	Stand-pipe	Separate Connection	Stand-pipe
From R.D.C. Supply				
Bromham	29	—	102	—
Easterton	10	—	35	—
Gt. Cheverell	78	—	273	—
Little Cheverell	17	—	60	—
Market Lavington	214	—	749	—
Marston	29	—	103	—
Potterne	185	11	647	40
Poulshot	43	—	150	—
Rowde	119	5	386	20
Seend	187	22	650	78
West Lavington	15	—	53	—
Worton	76	—	265	—
Total ...	1,002	38	3,473	138
From Other Sources				
Roundway (*)	40	—	1,600	—
West Lavington	80	—	280	—
Bishops Cannings	70	8	225	30
Erlestoke...	35	—	123	—
Easterton	6	—	25	—
Total ...	231	8	2,253	30
Grand Total ...	1,233	46	5,726	168

(*) This figure includes the Mental Hospital.

Drainage and Sewerage

The Council have no sewage works but have assumed over a period of years, the responsibility for some 80 sewers or sewer ditches which deal with sullage water, overflows from cesspools and storm water. These discharge into streams and many have very little fall. They are cleaned as far as the limited labour resources permit, but are unsatisfactory and will remain so until modern sewerage and sewage disposal works are constructed.

Many people are installing their own disposal works in the form of Septic Tanks and Plans for 43 of these (including those attached to new houses) were received during the year.

Actual improvements to existing drainage systems and/or the installation of Septic Tanks were carried out in the case of 30 properties during the year.

Food Inspection.

Particulars of food condemned as unfit for human consumption are as follows :—

120 dozen Small Cakes (NAAFI)	Stale.
156 lbs. Beef	Decomposed.
60 lbs. Seedless Raisins	Decomposed.
6½ lbs. Cheese	Decomposed.
4 lbs. Bacon	Decomposed.
6 tins Plums	Decomposition or damaged tins
1 tin Pudding	
4 tins Baked Beans	
3 tins Meat	
1 tin Milk	
8 tins Fish	

In addition, a quantity of food was inspected for The Devizes Borough Council in the absence of their Sanitary Inspector.

Rodent Control.

Most of the work is done by the Wilts War Agricultural Executive Committee who employ full-time trained squads of rodent operators to deal with rats (and other pests on farms).

The Council employ a part-time Rodent Operator to deal with reported infestations.

The number of infestations dealt with during the year was six, besides the periodic treatment of the Council's Refuse Tip.

Milk and Dairies.

There are 324 registered milk producers in the District, which includes 49 Producer Retailers and 7 Retailers.

The number of farms producing designated milk continues to be low, viz. 32 Tuberculin Tested Herds and 36 Accredited Herds.

Many of the farms are in need of improvement as soon as the material shortage eases. During the year three new sheds and dairies were built, and repairs and improvements carried out to others.

Control of Civil Building.

During the year 271 licences were issued for housing work involving £25,207, and 81 for non-housing work involving £3,629.

Refuse Collection.

At the beginning of the year the arrangement in force for the collection of refuse was confined to a monthly collection of tins, glass, etc., which was done by a Contractor. The Council decided to improve this Public Service and in July commenced to collect all household refuse fortnightly by direct labour. This is done by a 10 cu. yd. Dennis Refuse Vehicle, manned by a driver and loader, and to date has worked satisfactorily. The Council have only one Refuse Tip (disused quarry at Seend) which is situated on the fringe of the district, necessitating long hauls. Efforts are being made to find another tip.

Summary of Inspections.

Rural Housing Survey	933
Housing (General)	164
Public Health (Complaints, etc.)... ...	68
Moveable Dwellings	2
Building Inspections	69
Sewerage	56
Drains (Tests)	47
Water Supply	126
Water Samples	9
Food	16
Cowsheds and Dairies	29
Refuse Collection	27
Factories and Workshops	10
Petroleum Regulations	5
Rodent Control	14
Infectious Diseases	5
Council House Sites	49
Control Civil Building	151
Knackers' Yards	2
Miscellaneous	19

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

G. E. WILLIAMS.